



First
Presbyterian
Church of Monroe

1820 to 2020

Celebrating
200 Years
of Faith
&
Service



September 27, 2020

108 Washington St., Monroe, Michigan 48161
734.242.1545; info@monroefirst.org
www.monroefirst.org

The mission of the First Presbyterian Church is to be ambassadors for Jesus Christ and to proclaim his salvation in worship, education, and outreach.

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

OPENING WORDS

(Psalm 25:1, 4-5)

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth and teach me, **for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.**

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

The Spirit is a force of love, wild and creative:

She tears down the walls of our hearts, and builds up courage from within.

The Spirit is a practice of freedom:

She is daring and audacious. She nurtures gentle strength.

That our hope may thrive and justice be our aim,

come, Spirit of Christ, and rise among us.

© 2020 enfleshed

OPENING HYMN #12 “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise” vss. 1, 3-4

- 1 Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible hid from our eyes, most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days, almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.
- 3 To all, life thou givest, to both great and small. In all life thou livest, the true life of all. We blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree, then wither and perish; but naught changeth thee.
- 4 Thou reignest in glory; thou dwellest in light. Thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight. All praise we would render; O help us to see 'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!

CALL TO CONFESSION

We are God's beloved people. As we rest in God's love, let us confess our sins.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(adapted from The Prayer of St. Francis)

Gracious God, you call us to be instruments of your peace, and we struggle with this call. So often we struggle to bring love in the midst of hate, pardon in the midst of harm, reconciliation in the midst of conflict, truth in the midst of lies, faith in the midst of doubt, hope in the midst of despair, light in the midst of darkness, and joy in the midst of sadness.

Forgive us, Lord, and help us to seek as much to be consoled as to console, to understand as much as to be understood, loved as to love. For it is in giving that one receives, in self-forgetting that one finds, in pardoning that one is pardoned, and in dying that one is raised to eternal life. Amen.

Hear now the silent confessions on our hearts.

SILENT CONFESSION

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

As we have died with Christ, so also we live with him, dead to sin and alive to God in Jesus, the Christ. Friends, hear and believe the Good News, in the name of Jesus, our Savior, we are forgiven. **Amen.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

SONG OF AFFIRMATION #128 “Shine, Jesus, Shine” v. 1 and refrain

(Sing! A New Creation!-green hymnal)

Lord, the light of your love is shining in the midst of the darkness, shining. Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us; set us free by the truth you now bring us: Shine on me, shine on me.

Refrain

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father’s glory. Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire. Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy. Send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light!

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Creator God, open our hearts and minds to hear your word for our lives. May it light anew the Spirit of Wisdom within us, encouraging us to conform our lives to the life of Jesus. **Amen.**

FIRST READING — Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING — Matthew 21:23-32

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON:

“Carrying Baggage”

Debra Davies

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH – from “The Brief Statement of Faith”

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church.

The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the church.

In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, “Come, Lord Jesus!”

HYMN #274

“If You and I Believe in Christ”

vss. 1-3

(Sing! A New Creation!-green hymnal)

- 1 If you and I believe in Christ and we together pray, the Holy Spirit will come down and set God's people free, and set God's people free, and set God's people free; the Holy Spirit will come down and set God's people free.
- 2 If you and I remain in Christ and we together pray, the Holy Bible teaches us that God will hear our prayer, that God will hear our prayer, that God will hear our prayer; the Holy Bible teaches us that God will hear our prayer.
- 3 If you and I have faith in Christ and we together pray, the Holy Spirit shows us how to follow in God's way, to follow in God's way, to follow in God's way; the Holy Spirit will lead us to follow in God's way.

CALL TO OFFERING

Please reflect on the blessings God has given you and how you might reach out.

DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Loving God, we experience your bountiful love in so many ways. We pledge these tokens of our love and gratitude to your service and ask that they be multiplied in your ministry throughout the world to bring justice and peace. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *(Pray for those who are ill and all health care workers and those in essential jobs serving us. Pray for our congregation now separated. Pray for our country's leaders as they make tough decisions. Pray for our world.)*

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

HYMN #634

“To God Be the Glory”

vss. 1-2

- 1 To God be the glory; great things he has done! So loved he the world that he gave us his Son, who yielded his life an atonement for sin, and opened the life-gate that all may go in.

Refrain

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord; let the earth hear his voice! Praise the Lord, praise the Lord; let the people rejoice! O come to the Father through Jesus the Son, and give him the glory: great things he has done!

- 2 Great things he has taught us; great things he has done, and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son; but purer and higher and greater will be our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.

Refrain

CHARGE AND BLESSING

Friends,

God is still speaking:

Love deeply, compassionately, with your whole self;

Listen more, speak less, and when you speak, speak the truth in love, following Christ's example;

Forgive yourself and others, releasing the bonds of hatred;

Respect all persons and welcome them into the fellowship of Jesus Christ, believers or not;

The road to transformation is crowded with unexpected people and events, know the Spirit travels with you;

Find quiet in yourselves, listening for the rush of wind over the water and the rustling of the trees, for these are the voice of God;

Find humor where you can, laugh often and with abandon;

Follow the rhythm of life; and

Choose joy, always.

© *Debra J. Davies*

May the grace of our Lord, Jesus the Christ,

The love of God,

And the love and comfort of the Holy Spirit go with each of us as we leave this service. **AMEN.**

Ushers: Sue and Jim Heisler

About our Guest Speaker this Sunday!

Debra Davies, M.Div., is a graduate of San Francisco Theological Seminary (1998). She is a Ruling Elder of 40 years, having served four different congregations in that role as well as Clerk of Session in two congregations. She has long been involved in ecumenical activities, visited churches on three continents, and values the diversity of people of faith across Christian and non-Christian denominations and traditions.